



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Jane Matilda Bolin papers**

1939-1994

Sc MG 83

## Summary

**Creator:** Bolin, Jane M. (Jane Matilda), 1908-2007

**Title:** Jane Matilda Bolin papers

**Date:** 1939-1994

**Size:** 0.88 linear feet (3 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Jane Matilda Bolin, 1993.

**Revision History:** Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

**Abstract:** Jane Matilda Bolin was the first African American woman judge in the United States. This collection includes biographical and professional material.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Jane Matilda Bolin papers, Sc MG 83, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Accessioned by Diana Lachatanere, June 1993.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

## Creator History

Jane Matilda Bolin, born in 1908, was the first Black graduate of Yale University Law School. She was appointed judge in the Domestic Relations Court of New York City (now Family Court) in 1939, making her the first African American woman judge in the United States. As a judge, she changed segregationist policies that had been entrenched in the system, including skin-color based assignments for probation officers. Additionally, Bolin worked with first lady Eleanor Roosevelt in providing support for the Wiltwyck School, a comprehensive, holistic program to help eradicate juvenile crime among boys. Bolin also served on the boards of several organizations, including the National Association for the

Advancement of Colored People and the New York Urban League.

## **Scope and Content Note**

This collection consists of biographical sketches, some legal decisions, and other papers; correspondence concerning awards, honorary degrees, her retirement, and other matters; texts of several speeches; invitations to official events; and papers regarding her resignation from the Board of Directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In addition, there are news clippings, certificates, diplomas, and articles about her father, Gaius C. Bolin, the first Black graduate of Williams College and an attorney.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American women in the professions -- New York (State) -- New York  
African American women judges  
African American women lawyers

### **Names**

Bolin, Jane M. (Jane Matilda), 1908-2007  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Biographical information
- b. 1 f. 2 Interview transcript 1990
- b. 1 f. 3 Association of the Bar of New York City membership application 1943
- b. 1 f. 4 Speeches 1944-1983
- b. 1 f. 5 Personal correspondence 1942-1987
- b. 1 f. 6 Programs 1940-1994
  - Bolin, Gaius
  - Father of Jane Bolin.
- b. 1 f. 7 Personal papers and clippings
- b. 1 f. 8 Williams College
  - b. 2 Certificates and awards
- b. 3 f. 1 Includes doctorate degree certificate, certificate of appreciation from the Association of Judges of the Family Court of the State of New York, and a certificate of appreciation from the Mayor of New York. Correspondence regarding awards in box 3, folder 1.
- b. 3 f. 2 Clippings and articles 1947-1993
  - Professional correspondence
- b. 3 f. 3 1943-1981
- b. 3 f. 4 Invitations
- b. 3 f. 5 Retirement 1978-1979
- b. 3 f. 6 Writing
- b. 3 f. 7 Legal papers
- b. 3 f. 8 85th birthday
- b. 3 f. 9 Court induction 1939
- b. 3 f. 10 Resignation from NAACP Board